

## City of Tallahassee Electric Utility Eastern Transmission Line Project

### Project Need:

*Over the last decade, the City has experienced significant growth and development, and a corresponding increase in the demand for electricity. This has been especially true in the fast growing eastern portion of the City and adjacent Leon County where development has outpaced the construction of electric transmission lines and substations. The currently inadequate transmission and substation network in this large and rapidly growing part of the City's service area creates a reliability concern.*

*As a standard design practice for reliability, residential and commercial customers electricity needs should be able to be supplied from a number of alternative substations in the area when a major outage occurs. These alternative substations are all linked together by a transmission line network. When major outages occur, the City must currently rely on the lower voltage distribution system to keep the power flowing to its customers. This lower voltage system has capacity limits, which means we would not be able to keep an uninterrupted flow of power to this area in the event of a major outage. Further, much of this system is currently served by a one-way feed from distant substations, so that a distribution line failure would effectively leave all customers beyond that point without power until the cause of the outage was found and repaired. This level of service is not consistent with our customers' needs or expectations.*

*The only acceptable and permanent way of providing a reliable source of electricity and providing for continuing growth to the eastern part of Tallahassee is to reinforce this area with the proper substation and transmission infrastructure. This infrastructure cannot wait any longer. A temporary substation has already been constructed, and now an additional distribution feeder is needed to support the area load. Growth on the electric system continues and the load is projected to increase at a rate of approximately 3 percent per year in the near future. Considering that substations in the east part of the service territory are approaching maximum load, major problems are likely to occur if the proposed substation and transmission line are not in service by the 2004/2005 winter peak.*

### Project History:

- Initial Work began on the Mahan Route in 2001.
- City Commission approved the construction of an overhead transmission line along Mahan Drive  
June 13, 2001.
- However, after further consideration of the fact that Mahan serves as a major gateway into the city, and based on the desire to get additional citizen involvement, the construction was postponed until an Independent Route Study could be conducted.
- A Route Study was conducted by EDAW/Exponential Engineering Co. from June 2002 to June 2003.
- Public Workshops were held on August 27, 2002 and April 22, 2003, after 7600 notices were mailed to the neighborhoods, notices were published in the Tallahassee Democrat and signage was provided in the impacted area.
- Public Comments were recorded at both workshops, and the comment period after second workshop was extended until May 26, 2003 to provide additional time for responses.
- At the request of the neighborhoods, City Electric staff attended and made presentations at the October 24, 2002 Buck Lake Alliance annual Homeowners meeting, the January 7, 2003 Meadow Hills Homeowners meeting, and the October 9, 2003 Buck Lake Alliance annual Homeowners meeting.

- The Final Report from the route consultant was submitted to the City in late September 2003.
- The route consultant recommended Route N as the preferred route to carry forward. Route F was the route consultant's second highest recommended preferred route (see attached Route Map).
- In mid-November, approximately 7600 postcards were mailed to residents notifying them of the consultant's recommendation, staff's recommendation of Route A, and the intent to present an agenda item to the City Commission requesting approval of the staff's recommended route.
- At the December 10, 2003 meeting, the City Commission gave conceptual approval of Route A with the understanding that a third public workshop would be held on January 6, 2004, the results of which would be presented at the January 14, 2004 City Commission meeting.
- City Staff met with Leon County Staff regarding Leon County Commission concerns on 12/16/03.
- On December 11, 2003, City Staff issued an open invitation to Leon County Commissioners for individual briefings prior to the third Public Workshop scheduled on January 6, 2004; Commissioners Thael and Rackleff accepted the invitations and were provided detailed briefings.
- A third Public Workshop was held on January 6, 2004 after 7600 notices were mailed to residents, as along with a corresponding press release being issued.
- A summary of the third Public Workshop was provided to the City Commission for consideration of staff's recommended route on January 14, 2004. The City Commission voted to accept staff's recommendation of Route A, effective January 29, 2004 to allow for further interaction with the Leon County Commission relating to their concerns.
- On January 28, 2004, the City Commission voted to defer the effective date of their approval to March 1, 2004 and to conduct a Public Hearing on February 11, 2004.
- On February 4, 2004 Commissioner Katz and City Staff met with leaders of neighborhood associations impacted by Route A (Mahan Dr.). During this meeting another alternate route was identified that followed Route A to Dempsey Mayo, then north on Dempsey Mayo to a point just north of the Miccosukee Greenway, parallel to the Greenway to a point that the line could be routed back southeast to the substation (this proposed route has been identified as Route AMG).
- On February 5, 2004 Electric Utility staff participated in a community meeting on the project hosted by the Buck Lake Alliance to provide further information to the effected residents and encourage dialogue regarding the proposed routes.
- On February 11, 2004 the City Commission held a public hearing on the route selection for Eastern Transmission Line, and voted 5-0 to delay a decision for no more than four months to allow for further exploration of Route AMG and alternatives for underground construction of Route A (Mahan Drive). The Commission limited further exploration of alternatives to these two routes with flexibility for variations. During this discussion the Commission discussed the increased probability for potential power outages in the eastern part of the electric system by extending the length of time for a final decision, and the need for public involvement relating to the proposed Miccosukee Greenway alternative route

### Route Analysis

- The route consultant developed a total of 33 potential routes. Six of the highest ranked alternative routes were presented to the community at the Second Public Workshop.
- After the Second Public Workshop, the consultant reexamined and revised his scoring which caused some changes in the final scoring on various routes. Route AD was one of the highest ranked alternative routes presented at the second Public Workshop. It was subsequently replaced by the consultant with Route N, which was not disclosed to the City



until June 27, 2003 (From a public perspective, this route should be viewed very comparable to Route AD, because it utilizes significant portions of that route).

### Cost Estimates

- Overhead Line Construction estimates for these routes are as follows:  
 Route A: \$5,400,000      Route E: \$5,800,000      Route F: \$ 6,700,000  
 Route N: \$8,900,000      Route P: \$10,000,000      Route T: \$12,000,000.
- Estimates for Construction of combination Underground/Overhead Lines; **ONLY that portion of each route that is located on either Mahan or Buck Lake Roads to be installed underground:**  
 Route A: \$35,300,000      Route E: \$26,700,000      Route F: \$ 26,900,000  
 Route N: \$17,500,000      Route P: \$11,000,000      Route T: \$14,700,000

### Recommendation by Electric Utility Staff

Staff does not concur with the consultant's recommendation. Instead, staff recommended Route A for the following reasons:

- a. The survey data from the first Public Workshop had the highest number of respondents, 22 out of a total 65, asking for "a route with the least impact on families, homes, and land, which would mean using only existing right-of-way, main roads, and commercial areas. Route A is the route that follows this request as closely as possible
- b. A majority of the responding public preferred this route to the alternatives presented at the second Public Workshop. Below is the compilation of the resident's preference provided prior to the announcement of staff's recommendation in November 2003:
 

Route A	177
Route E	5
Route F	6
Route P	53
Route T	51
Route AD	19
Route O	1
No route	1
Don't favor or don't have a preferred route	7
Information is too much and not relevant for what is needed	1
Don't favor any route as long as the line is underground	1
- c. Route A is the most economical overhead line route.
- d. The use of Route N as the preferred alternative is problematic, including liability terms generally imposed by CSX upon owners of facilities in the railway right-of-way. The City Attorney's Office has recommended against the use of CSX Right of Way for this reason. Furthermore, there are access concerns along the railway corridor for construction and operation of the line that may require additional property acquisition.
- e. Route N impacts approximately 3.5 miles of homes and land not currently impacted by any overhead electric line. Route F impacts approximately 2 miles of homes and land not currently impacted by any overhead electric line. All of proposed Route A is currently impacted by overhead electric lines.
- f. This same land for route N or Route F could require the City to condemn some of the property for construction of the transmission line. Route A is proposed to be built on

existing right-of-way (with the exception of approximately 450' along the north side of Mahan Drive near Weems Road).

- g. Finally, the survey data suggests that the public perceives Buck Lake Road different in character than Mahan Drive. Mahan Drive is considered a major highway through the community while Buck Lake Road is considered a rural route. The community prefers that it be kept this way. Any route (Routes E, F, and N) that includes the use of Buck Lake Road would impact the rural character.

### **Community Notification of Recommendation**

- a. Approximately 7600 direct mail postcards were sent to residents in the study area on November 12 & 13, 2003, and a press release was issued on November 14, 2003.
- b. A WCOT "Tallahassee Matters" segment on the transmission line project aired November 14 -December 10, 2003.
- c. The City website was updated with the recommendation and provided a form for comments.

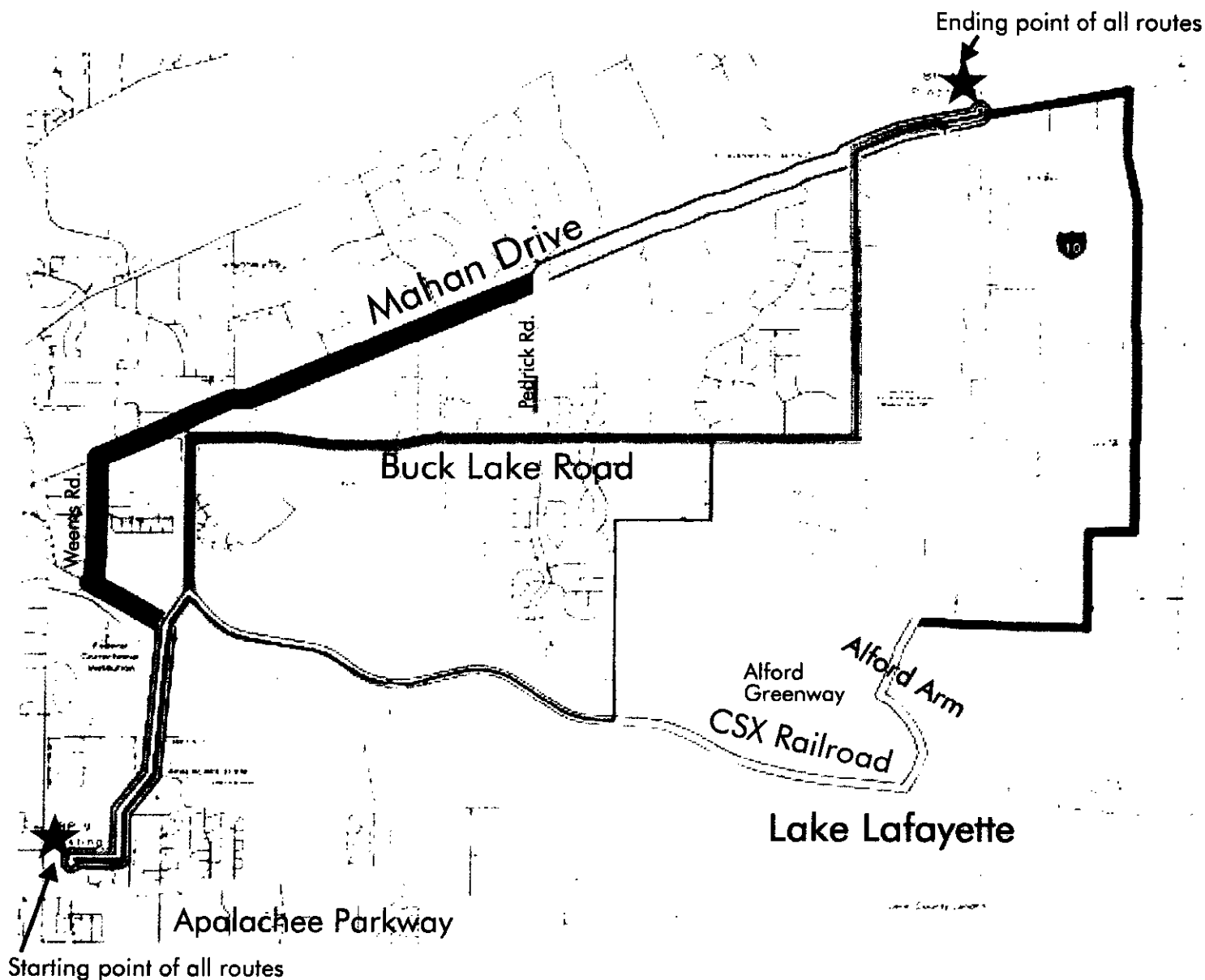
### **Results of Citizen Feedback on Recommendation (between 11/14/03 and 12/10/03)**

- a. Telephone: 7 calls  
Generally positive
- b. Website: 253 visits  
1 Comment form completed - Positive
- c. Email: 2  
Route A - 1  
Route N or Underground Route A - 1
- d. Homeowners Groups: 5  
Supportive - 2  
Supportive with some Underground on Mahan - 2  
Opposed - 1
- e. Leon County Concerns:  
Overhead/Aesthetic Impact on Gateway  
Health Concerns - EMF  
Risk of Property Devaluation  
Further Exploration of Other Routes

### **Results of Citizen Feedback at the Third Public Workshop (received 1/6/04 & 1/7/04)**

- Attendance - 59
- Number of comments received
  - 42 written comments (at the meeting)
  - 1 email comment form (immediately following the meeting)
  - 2 website comment forms
  - 1 faxed comment form
- Summary of Comments
  - Route A 26 (including 5 preferring some portion or the entire line underground)
  - Route N 15
  - Route P 4
  - No Route 1 (but oppose Route A)

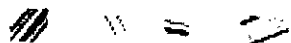
# Eastern Transmission Line Primary Alternative Routes



## Legend

- Route A
- Route E
- Route F
- Route P
- Route T
- Route N

Routes that follow the same path are represented by multiple stacked colors.



The beginning point for all routes is the existing substation located east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway indicated by colored star. The end point is a proposed substation at Mystic Warrior Trail indicated by colored star.

In order to best utilize these descriptions, you may want to print this page to compare it to the map on page one.

## Route A

Begins at the existing substation east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway. It follows an existing transmission line easement to the east and north through Tom Brown Park to Weems Road. The route continues north along Weems Road, over the top of the existing distribution line to Mahan Drive. The route then turns east along Mahan Drive all the way to the proposed substation at Mystic Warrior Trail.

## Route E

Begins at the existing substation east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway. It follows an existing transmission line easement to the east and north through Tom Brown Park. The route then turns to the northeast to the CSX railway corridor and then east again between the Weems Plantation Development and Fallschase. It continues north to Buck Lake Road and then east along Buck Lake Road. The route then turns north at Pedrick Road to Mahan Drive. The route then turns to the east along Mahan Drive to the proposed Substation at Mystic Warrior Trail.

## Route F

Begins at the existing substation east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway. It follows an existing transmission line easement to the east and north to Tom Brown Park. The route would then turn to the northeast following the CSX railway corridor and then east between the Weems Plantation Development and Fallschase. It would continue north to Buck Lake Road and then east along Buck Lake Road. The route then turns north just east of Alameda Drive to Mahan Drive just east of the interstate interchange. The route then turns east to the proposed substation at Mystic Warrior Trail.

## Route P

Begins at the existing substation east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway. It follows an existing transmission line easement to the east and north through Tom Brown Park. The route would then turn northeast to the CSX railway corridor. The route then follows the railway to the eastern edge of the Alford Arm Greenway. The route then turns north along Old Dirt Road and to Mahan Drive east of the interchange. It then turns east to the proposed substation at Mystic Warrior Trail.

## Route T

Begins at existing substation east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway. It follows an existing transmission line easement to the east and north through Tom Brown Park. The route would then turn northeast to the CSX railway corridor. The route then follows the railway to the eastern edge of the Alford Arm Greenway where it would turn to the north. It continues north, northwest and then northeast for approximately one mile before turning east. The route would then move east for approximately eight tenths of a mile. The route then turns north for approximately ½ mile. It then turns east again for approximately .25 mile. It then turns again to the north to Mahan Drive and the proposed substation at Mystic Warrior Trail.

## Route N

Begins at the existing substation east of Capital Circle and north of Apalachee Parkway. It follows an existing transmission line easement to the east and north through Tom Brown Park. The route would then turn northeast to the CSX Railway corridor. The route then follows the railway to the western edge of the Alford Arm Greenway. It turns north here following the western edge of the greenway to Nabb Road. The route turns east here to Rutledge Road where it turns north to Buck Lake Road. At Buck Lake Road the route turns to the east and follows Buck Lake Road to just east of Alameda Drive. The route then turns north to Mahan Drive just east of the interstate interchange. The route then turns east to the proposed substation at Mystic Warrior Trail.